

to God virtually drip from our public buildings, and invocations of the Creator's blessing crop up at every important public gathering throughout our history. We have wandered off the Framers' track on this, and we need to work toward a better understanding of what was intended, what was to be protected and why.

I hope that our fine colleague, Mr. LIEBERMAN, continues to try to further the conversation. Not to do so would be detrimental. I fear that the misunderstanding about this issue is huge and growing. There is a new sort of intolerance about religion that I find most disturbing. It has become the thing we don't talk about, because it is not politically correct, so many of us are driven into a closet. It is seen as a divider in our culture, instead of the force for good it certainly can and should be.

Where we do not want to go, and where we have rapidly been heading, is toward an instituted governmental policy which is prejudiced against all religion. We need to think long and hard about this together, as a country. How sadly ironic it would be if, after over 200 years, a nation grounded in religion and founded by religious men and women, with shining faith-based ideals about equality, fairness, freedom, and justice, and decades of effort to make those ideals a reality, wound up reflecting in its laws and policies a prejudice against religion and religious people.

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN'S INJURY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I yield the floor—I seek recognition again for 1 minute simply to express my joy in seeing my friend and our illustrious, highly respected, and able colleague, DIANNE FEINSTEIN, back with us on the floor today. We are sorry that misfortune has for the moment seen fit to not deal with her fairly, but in time all will be corrected and I am sure she will be just as always, as new. She is a fine Senator. She is a great friend of mine. I consider her to be someone we should all try to emulate. It might be very difficult for some of us to emulate her. But we are proud of her, proud of the work she does. I salute her today, and I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. I very much appreciate those comments. Last Friday night, I took a tumble down stone stairs and managed to have a compound fracture of my tibia and crack a couple of ribs, so I can't say I am none the worse for wear, but I thank the Senator very much for his warm words. I greatly appreciate it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for some time in morning business for the purposes of introducing a bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Chair. (The remarks of Mrs. FEINSTEIN and Mr. SPECTER pertaining to the introduction of S. 3007 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, under rule XXII of the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that my hour to speak under cloture for the motion to proceed be yielded to Senator MOYNIHAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THOMAS. What is the order of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a postcloture situation on the motion to proceed to the PNTR.

TO AUTHORIZE EXTENSION OF NONDISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. THOMAS. I will proceed with PNTR on that basis. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, as chairman of the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4444, a bill to establish permanent normal trade relations with the People's Republic of China.

Let me begin today by disposing of the principle argument offered by opponents of this bill—that this bill somehow is a "gift" to the PRC, a reward. To hear the opponents of this bill talk, you would think that we were on the losing end of this equation.

However, examining the basic facts shows there is a fatal flaw in that assertion. Our markets are already open to the Chinese and to Chinese goods;

the same is not true about our ability to enter China's markets. This bill, and the accompanying accession of China to the WTO, changes that. This bill opens up their markets to the United States. This bill lowers tariff and non-tariff barriers to our goods and services. This bill gives us a level playing field. In other words, it is a win-win situation for the United States.

It is estimated that in the first year after this bill is enacted, and China accedes to the WTO, our trade with China will increase by \$14 billion; in other words, almost double today's volume. And that translates into more jobs for U.S. workers and U.S. companies.

To use my home State of Wyoming, as an example, which is not a large export State, China ranked as Wyoming's 15th largest export destination in 1999; that is up from 16th in 1998 and 19th in 1997. Our largest exports are agricultural products, such as beef, grains, and, in addition to that, minerals.

Under this agreement, Wyoming farmers and cattlemen will no longer have to compete with export subsidies China uses to make its agricultural products unfairly competitive. China has agreed to eliminate sanitary requirements which are not based on sound scientific bases and which act as artificial barriers to products from America's Northwest, which includes Wyoming. Wyoming producers will benefit from a broadening of the right to import and distribute imported products in China, and from wide tariff cuts on a wide range of products.

To illustrate, under the agreement, China has cut its tariff on beef from 45 percent to 12 percent. It has cut its tariff on pork from 20 percent to 12 percent. And, significantly for a great number of my constituents in Sweetwater County, it will reduce its exorbitant tariffs on soda ash—90 percent of which is mined in Wyoming—from double-digits to 5.5 percent.

Passage of this bill means fewer barriers to U.S. exports. Fewer barriers mean more exports, and more exports mean more jobs for Wyoming farmers, ranchers, cattlemen and small business owners.

I don't need to tell my colleagues about the present sorry economic state of many of our agricultural sectors and small businesses. The key to their continuing viability and growth is increasing their share of foreign markets. It is for that principal reason that I support this bill and for China to go into the WTO. Clearly, it is going to be more advantageous for us to deal with the People's Republic of China through this organization than on a unilateral basis which we have done for the last number of years. By the way, this same trade arrangement has been available to them on an annual basis.

Let me make one more observation before moving on. Defeating the bill will not keep the PRC out of the WTO.